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SUGAR INDUSTRY IN SOUTH CHINA

The warm moist climate of this province is admirably adapted for cane-growing, so it stands first among the mainland provinces in the sugar industry. Cane is grown in more than 50 hsien, the chief centers being Nei-chiang and Tru-chung on the T'o Chiang. Mostly native varieties of cane with poor productivity and low sugar content are grown. Old methods are used, resulting in high costs and in inferior product. Various types of sugar and sweetmeats are made, which are sold locally.

During the war some refining plants were installed, but war and transport conditions greatly interfered with marketing. With the coming of peace, the industry has been slowly reviving with the help of the provincial Reconstruction Office.

This province, especially Hai-nan Island, is well adapted to cane growing, which is well distributed over the more level topography. Both foreign and native species are cultivated, and some modern mills have been installed. In 1932, a 5-year plan was adopted, calling for an output of 500 tons of refined sugar per day. Under this plan the industry was largely a government monopoly with both production and marketing strictly controlled. Unfortunately, sugar making suffered much from the war and only two mills have resumed operation.

Gum is grown mainly in the southeastern hsien, where foreign strains of the plant predominate. Sugar products in considerable quantity are exported annually from Hsia-men, the best known being Fukien rock candy.

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4. Kwangsi

Cane, mostly of the native variety, is grown in the southeastern hsien. Coarse yellow sugar is the principal product. A modern mill capable of crushing 300 tons of cane daily, was set up at Kuei Hsien in 1934, but it was destroyed by Japanese bombing and is still in ruins. Kwangsi imports a portion of its coarse yellow sugar.

5. Kiangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, and Chekiang

In the southern Kiangsi some cane is grown, and coarse sugar is made by primitive methods. In 1940, a mill using modern machinery was set up by the provincial government at Kan Hsien and produced one ton daily. During the war, there was some shipping of sugar to near-by provinces, where manufacture was still in the handicraft stage.

Thirty hsien in Yunnan grow cane of the native variety. Crude methods are used to produce coarse sugars. The Heng-t'ung Company set up two refining plants, but only one was able to secure any modern machinery. During the war, it turned to the manufacture of alcohol, bringing the industry a spurt of prosperity. Since the war, the sugar business in Yunnan has been in the doldrums.

Some cane is grown in the southwestern parts of Kweichow. Methods of sugar making are primitive, and the product is coarse brown sugar. A mill using modern machinery was set up at An-lung in 1944 and produced better grades. Kweichow province does not produce enough sugar for its own use and has to import from Szechwan.

In Chekiang, unimproved varieties of cane from which brown sugar is made by primitive methods are grown. Chih-hua and I-wu, near the center of the province, are the chief producing areas.

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